

1203

S P E E C H

OF THE

834

HON. JAMES A. STEWART,

OF MARYLAND,

ON THE

Revision of the Tariff of 1857.

Delivered in the House of Representatives,

February 7, 1859.

BALTIMORE . . . PRINTED BY JOHN MURPHY & Co.

MARBLE BUILDING, 182 BALTIMORE STREET.

1859.

6027

1898

1898

1898

1898

1898

1898

1898

1898

S P E E C H.

THE House being in the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union—

MR. STEWART said: Mr. Chairman, it is made the duty of the President of the United States, by the constitution, to communicate to Congress, from time to time, information in regard to the state of the Union, and to recommend such measures as he may deem expedient and proper. In compliance with this constitutional obligation, a message was transmitted at the commencement of this session, comprehensive in its scope, and impartial in its explanation of the state of public affairs. It becomes our duty, as a component part of the government, to consider well the recommendation, and adopt such legislation as may be necessary to promote the public welfare. The District I have the honor to represent claims from this government no particular favors. All that they ask is, that it shall be faithfully conducted, their constitutional rights secured; and that the administration discharge its high trust with entire impartiality and fidelity. I, therefore, as the representative of the first Congressional district of Maryland, take leave to announce, that I am not expected to be the advocate of any special scheme or policy, except in perfect keeping with the outlines I have indicated. The people who repose confidence in me require no tariff for protection; they demand no particular line of policy with a view of subserving especially their interests; and they desire that those who have charge of the government—the administration and Congress—shall discharge their several duties so as to protect and preserve all the diversified interests of the whole country.

Now, sir, I cannot undertake, during the time allotted to me, to review all the topics which are so intelligently and ably embraced in the President's message. Prominent among these, and perhaps primarily to be considered, is the subject of the finances or the tariff question. Another matter, highly important, is the construction of a railroad from the Atlantic States to the Pacific. Another great question which conspicuously arrests the attention of the country, and must command consideration, is the proposition in reference to the acquisition of Cuba. So far as the time to which I am entitled will permit me, I propose to present to the House such considerations in relation to these topics as will govern me in the discharge of my duty when any of them may require our action. I state to the committee emphatically, that I am utterly opposed to the doctrine of protection *per se* in the arrangement of a tariff. I am in favor of securing to the government of the United States a revenue, adequate and competent to meet all the exigencies of the public service; and, as to the mode by which you shall adjust your tariff, I look upon that as a matter of detail.

Whether you shall have specific duties, in part, as urged by the President, or duties *ad valorem*, as maintained by Mr. Secretary Cobb, I think is not such a cardinal question as should warmly divide us or the American people. In adjusting the details of a tariff for the purpose of obtaining the necessary revenue, it may be more wise that you should place upon some articles specific duties; and in the very same tariff, upon other commodities, adopt the *ad valorem* principle.

As a representative of the people, on this floor, and a member of the Democratic party, to which I am proud to belong, I do not recognize any obligation resting upon any member of that party to square his conduct upon that subject, either according to the doctrines announced by the President of the United States in preference to those of the Secretary of the Treasury, or *e converso*; for they differ upon this subject, both professing to be democrats. I should be sorry to think that the great democratic party of this country was so reduced in its dimensions and in its platform as now to have dwindled down to, and to be disposed of upon, the single, isolated point, whether duties imposed by the government for revenue, are to be arranged upon either the principle of specific, or *ad valorem*, exclusively. No, sir, that would be quite as idle and ludicrous, it seems to me, as was the controversy which arose in the days of Locke, about the silk stocking. In that metaphysical age, there was a great and all-pervading question, which convulsed the whole nation, as to the identity of a silk stocking. The grave inquiry was elaborately discussed by the metaphysicians and logicians of that day. The absorbing question was, suppose you take a silk stocking, and change and modify it, darn it with yarn until you have nothing left of the silk, was it the identical silk stocking or a woollen stocking? and if not a silk stocking, when did it become a yarn stocking? some maintaining that it was a silk stocking, and others as strenuously contending that it was a yarn stocking. And the difficulty was, in case it had essentially changed, to learn at what precise time it became metamorphosed and lost its identity, and, especially, whether it occurred as long as there was any silk left.

This question of the tariff would seem to be quite as prolific and perplexing as that which confounded the casuists in the days of Locke, as to the identity of the stocking. I have heard gentlemen here professing to act upon enlightened principles of statesmanship, agitate and discuss the principle of specific and *ad valorem* duties with very much of the same sort of spirit and *vim*. The policy which controls the democratic party, as I understand it, is not whether you have *specific* or *ad valorem* duties; but whether you shall have a tariff arranged in reference to *revenue* or *protection*. This is the great doctrine I apprehend—a tariff for revenue; and upon that, democrats of all sections can unite. I then completely ignore all this absurd controversy which is attempted to be inaugurated upon the exclusive propriety of specific or *ad valorem* duties. The main object should be to raise revenue; and if you will convince me, as a free trader, that by imposing specific duties you can conveniently raise more revenue than by *ad valorem* duties, according to the well-settled principles of free trade and a revenue tariff, I am bound to adopt the specific mode of imposing duties *quoad hoc*.

MR. SCALES. I would like to inquire of the gentleman from Maryland, whether, if he could raise a sufficient revenue by an *ad valorem* tariff, he would not prefer it?

MR. STEWART, of Maryland. I cannot say that I would, because there are other considerations connected with the matter of raising revenue. For instance, suppose I can raise the same amount of revenue by specific duties, or more than upon the *ad valorem* principle, and it should happen that by imposing the duties in that form I could afford incidental protection, I certainly would not discriminate against such protection.

MR. SCALES. What does the gentleman then want with more than enough revenue?

MR. STEWART, of Maryland. We do not want more than enough, and we are not likely to have as much as is required. The object is to raise a sufficiency. Under the tariff of 1857, which, by the by, is highly protective of some interests, to the disparagement of others, we have a very large free list, and different schedules under it also. Now, would my friend from North Carolina adopt the horizontal principle, take these articles out of the free list and out of the schedules, and apply the *ad valorem* principle to all articles? I apprehend not. My friend does not respond in the affirmative. Then, I maintain that under the tariff of 1857 you have articles on the free list upon which duties should be imposed. And I have understood from those who are more familiar with the details than I am, that there are items in its free list which would raise five or six millions dollars.

I would like to know of any opponent of a change of the tariff of 1857, and advocate of free trade, upon what principle he can go before the country and justify himself, when there are articles in it upon which duties ought to be imposed for revenue, and undertake pertinaciously to retain them under existing circumstances, with the present deficiency in the revenues of the country.

Why, sir, we have had tariffs from the beginning of the government. Since the war of 1812, there have been the tariffs of 1816, 1824, 1828, 1832, 1842, 1846, and 1857. There are different and various schedules in them all; and no man can tell me, from the operations of the government and the course of trade, that any particular tariff, for all time, would be perfect and infallible, and need not be amended, always yielding sufficient revenue, and no more. It would seem to me that, according to the doctrine of some gentlemen, your tariff should be, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, unchangeable. If it were inflexible, it would not accomplish the purpose desired. Its revenues would much depend upon the vicissitudes of trade, inducing more or less of importations. It might not always raise enough of revenue. Then the exigencies of the country may be, and are, greater at one time than another. Some reasonable margin for surplus should be provided for, it seems to me, in preference to loans. I hold, therefore, that it is the duty of the representatives of the people, and particularly of the democratic party in this Congress, under the recommendation of the President of the United States, and reiterated in the report of the Secretary of the Treasury, to meet promptly the financial exigency in which we find ourselves.

It is not only the duty of the President of the United States to recommend to Congress measures that are of vital importance, but it is further his duty, if Congress fail to meet its responsibility in a crisis, to convene it again in extra session. He cannot escape from the responsibility that is devolved upon him by the constitution. The President of the United States and the Secretary of the Treasury, not only in their regular communications to Congress, but the

atter in a special report, in reply to a resolution of this House, (and he is in favor of *ad valorem*,) announce that there will not be, from any data they can command, sufficient revenue; and that, in all probability, at the close of this fiscal year, if a loan is not authorized or warrant for re-issue of treasury notes, the government will be without adequate funds. What is the attitude to be occupied by the friends of the administration in this House in such an emergency? What is the position it is to assume when it is told by those having control of the government, and whose duty it is to communicate with Congress, that revenue enough is not to be anticipated? From what source are we regularly and legitimately to derive information upon such subjects? This is a government of law and order, or ought to be. There are different departments and various branches of the public service. It is the duty of the President and of the Secretary of the Treasury, to communicate to us the state of the finances; and they have faithfully discharged that duty. They insist that there is not revenue enough, and both have recommended a revision of the tariff.

Mr. Chairman, one would suppose, from remarks made in this House from time to time, that gentlemen who undertake to talk on this subject, and who profess to be democrats par excellence and friends of the administration, were its adversaries, although they aided in bringing it into power, and thus have incurred, to some extent, a responsibility for its acts. Who clothed the President with the high responsibility which he is now called upon to assume? Who placed the Secretary of the Treasury in position? It was the democratic party. Then, sir, is it with the members of the democratic party here, with the elements of which it is composed, stoically to ignore the recommendation of those officers? We cannot relieve ourselves by any sort of hasty patchwork, and thus dodge the responsibility. We cannot undertake to carry on this government in defiance of what has been announced by those whose official duty it is to furnish the statistics in regard to the state of the treasury. It is not wise to attempt to do so. We are not, in my judgment, by such a negative course, sensibly meeting our responsibility. I know that we ought to retrench where it can properly be done. I am an advocate for economy. I understand the President and the administration, as a unit, favor economy. But, sir, what is economy? Of what does it consist? You may demolish your government, you may strike down your navy, your army, and your judiciary, forsooth, and in that wise you may save much more money than by some of the inefficient modes of curtailment suggested by gentlemen. But, would that be wise?

I am told that your annual expenses some years ago were only thirty or forty million dollars, but that they are now over seventy millions. What deduction is to be made from that? That there has necessarily been a wasteful expenditure of the public money? That, sir, is a *non sequitur*. You must point out to me in what that wasteful expenditure consists. Show me where any money has been improperly expended; demonstrate to me where any may be wisely saved, and I am ready to go with any gentleman, I care not of what party, to curtail such improper expenditure. But, sir, it is not sufficient for me, in view of the exhibits made by the President and the Secretary of the Treasury, to charge generally that there have been wasteful expenditures. It may be said that this is a free country, and that if a man cannot wear shoes he can go barefoot. The President may go down the avenue without boots, and

with his elbows out, but that would not be in keeping with the respectability of his position, nor deferential, indeed, to the people of the United States. So you may, by placing all of your officials and the whole machinery upon a similar minimum, save a great deal, but would it be wise or economical to do so? We must act up to the occasion; we must meet all of our responsibilities.

In making a tariff for revenue, you are not mainly to consider the question how far any particular interest may thereby be protected.

MR. LOVEJOY. I would like to inquire of the gentleman from Maryland, whether it is not his view that this revenue thus raised is really a tax upon the consumer of the articles upon which the impost is laid? If so, then why would it not be a cheaper way, and more in accordance with democratic principles, to have a direct tax, than a tariff.

MR. STEWART, of Maryland. Of course, all such duties are a tax upon consumption, and all revenues, to some extent, a necessary burden upon the people, for whose benefit the government is established, and there are several modes by which you can raise revenue under this government. One is by a system of direct taxation. Has the gentleman from Illinois examined the question as to the operation of a system of direct taxation? On what species of property or person, under that system, would he impose the tax?

MR. LOVEJOY. I wish to ascertain the views of the gentleman, whether, if revenue is to be raised, the imposition of a tariff is not the most expensive mode; whether, indeed, it is not more expensive than by direct taxation? In the latter there are no custom-houses, &c.

MR. STEWART, of Maryland. I should think not. I believe that the present system of imposts is far preferable to that of direct taxation. If you resort to a system of direct taxation, you will have officers under the federal government travelling over and through the different States. They will be multiplied from time to time, and will somewhat interfere with the operations of the people in their ordinary pursuits. It seems to me that, so far as State rights and prerogatives are concerned, the system of direct taxation would be calculated to bring the States more under the control of the general government, and much more offensive to State sovereignty and pride.

MR. LOVEJOY. I ask the gentleman whether the whole thing could not be done through the State officers, inasmuch as the State taxes are raised in that way? Could not the federal taxes be raised in the same manner?

MR. STEWART. The State officers might be selected, but in the discharge of that duty they would be under the control of the general government. I do not know that that would be better calculated to aid the collection of the taxes than for the federal government to constitute its own officers. I know that the system of direct taxation is contended for by some gentlemen of the South; and I would like to be informed whether the gentleman from Illinois is in favor of abolishing the duties upon imports and resorting to direct taxation?

MR. LOVEJOY. My object was to ascertain the views of the gentleman from Maryland. I did not propose to put forward my own.

MR. STEWART, of Maryland. If the gentleman from Illinois does not choose to answer, that is a matter for himself. I will not catechise him.

MR. LOVEJOY. If the gentleman should wish me to reply, I would say, that I think that direct taxation is the constitutional mode of raising revenue, if

we are to have a tariff simply for revenue purposes, without any regard to protection. I think that would be more proper, and the cheapest mode.

MR. STEWART, of Maryland. I apprehend that the gentleman has not considered fully the effect of a system of direct taxation. From the foundation of the government to the present time, direct taxation has been resorted to on two or three occasions only. In time of war, when revenue cannot be raised by impost duties, direct taxation must be relied upon. The eighth section of the constitution of the United States provides that Congress "shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defence of the United States;" but that "all duties, imposts, and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States." While providing for uniformity of duties, it does not ordain that direct taxation shall be uniform. Why is the word "taxes" left out in that provision? Because they are provided for in another section upon a different principle. The second section directs that representatives and direct taxation shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons; so when we come to impose direct taxes, we must do it on the principle of *apportionment*. The other duties are to be imposed upon the principle of *uniformity*. Those who would undertake to inaugurate the system of direct taxation would find themselves surrounded with very perplexing difficulties.

In this connection I may say, there is another provision in the constitution, to wit: that "no capitation or other direct tax shall be laid, except in proportion to the census or enumeration directed to be taken." Now, it has been decided by the Supreme Court of the United States, I believe, that you can only tax land or persons under that clause of the constitution. You cannot tax personal property. Then, if you were to resort to a system of direct taxation you would have to tax the lands and the people *in personam* of the different States and Territories, according to their number. From the great variety of climate, soil, and facilities for market, there would be much difficulty in assessing lands in different sections of the country fairly and equally. You would require the same officers to travel through the thirty-two States and Territories, affixing a valuation on property; men who would understand all the reasons and considerations that should operate in making up the value. The system would be attended with more objections and greater inequalities than can possibly grow up under the system of imposts. It would be the most difficult thing in the world to ascertain precisely the apportionment, so as to equalize taxes in all sections of the country.

Yes, sir, if we were to abandon the system of imposts and resort to direct taxation, it would involve us in infinite trouble, and would, in all probability, occasion a revolution or some outbreak. Such, indeed, has been our lamentable experience. I am sure, therefore, that such a measure would be next to impracticable. There never, in the history of the world, was a great government like ours carried on with such slight burdens to the people. We have heard a good deal here in respect to the tariff of 1857, and other tariffs; but in my own section I have heard no serious complaints of the burdens of the federal government. The same thing, I presume, is the case in other parts of the country. All this fuss, clamor, and disturbance about the expenses of the

government, are connected with presidential schemes, I fear. It may be, with jobs of plunder and favoritism. All that the people desire is, that the administration and their representatives shall see that no money is wastefully expended. And yet we have heard gentlemen say here, "strike down your army, dismantle your navy, put out your light-houses, batter to pieces your marine hospitals, and make your post-office self-sustaining." I have even heard some go so far as to intimate that Congress should be self-sustaining, and why not all branches of the government be self-supporting? When a man can raise himself by the waistbands of his breeches, such things may be done.

Let us consider, for a moment. The country has been extended immensely. We have now six Territories, while, when our annual expenditure was but \$40,000,000, we had but one Territory. Now, we own the whole country reaching to the Pacific. We have just had a *quasi* war with Utah. We have had wars with the Indians. There is also the expedition to Paraguay. All these are attended with enormous expense. We have established overland mail routes to the Pacific, and across the Atlantic, to different points—also at great cost. And now, it is proposed to build a railroad from the Atlantic States to the Pacific. I think, however, that it would be wise and sensible on the part of the Congress of the United States, before undertaking that work, to let the country be explored a little more; to have wagon roads opened, and mail routes, and to encourage emigration and settlement. By these means, a road may be built much more satisfactorily and economically than if we undertook to construct it now.

It is said, also, that the rates of postage should be increased. The mileage of members has also been talked of, and it has been said that the members from California ought not to get so much for mileage, while a member from Maryland receives but a small pittance. For my part, I do not think that the mileage paid to a member from California, or the Pacific country, more than compensates him for the sacrifices which he makes for the public interest.

I once heard of an old woman who, in the startling days of the Millerites, was told that the world was coming to an end. "Great God!" was her nervous reply, "what shall I do in such a case for 'snuff?'"

It may be said now, how could we get along without gas and dyspeptic politicians? Mileage, boxes for Congressmen, and saddle-horses for messengers, "beggars on horseback," &c., are grave subjects, and fruitful of eloquent discussion. If you give a member from the Pacific more pay, in the shape of mileage, than the member from Maryland, why the member from Maryland has his compensating reciprocity in being able to go home occasionally to his family, and in attending, to a certain extent, to his business there. It seems to me, then, that there is nothing unjust, unfair, or unreasonable, in allowing those members who come from remote sections of the Union additional mileage. It may operate to keep the different sections of the country better together. Strike down your overland mail service, annihilate the facilities of communication which connect us in the East with the Pacific slope, and you sunder one of the strong ligaments which bind this country in close communion. I look upon these facilities of intercourse between the sovereign States of this Union, or remote possessions, as calculated to unite the people and perpetuate the government of this republic. You may, if you think proper, graduate your rates of postage by not changing it from three cents for a certain distance, then

increasing it to five cents for all distances, say of not less than one hundred and not more than five hundred miles, and ten cents for all distances over. You may adopt some graduating system in reference to distance like that, which will answer every purpose, and I shall not object; but, sir, I protest, in the name of the people, against these wild and utopian schemes called retrenchment and reform, but which are perversions, and which would reduce this government from the proportions of a giant to those of a miserable dwarf. It is simply dwarfing this government, and utterly unworthy of the age in which we live. Unless gentlemen can show how such a system is to benefit our whole country, I cannot join in such a crusade, however much opposed to a magnificent government.

Now, Mr. Chairman, so much for my views in regard to the tariff and other incidental matters; and I think I am sufficiently understood. Before leaving the subject, however, I will say that I think that gentlemen who plant themselves upon the doctrine of free trade, and upon the dogma of specific or *ad valorem* duties exclusively, occupy fallacious ground. They are not holding that high position which they should. When the expenses of this government have necessarily run up to some sixty or seventy million dollars, they should see the necessity and propriety of having a tariff sufficient for revenue, and those who are protectionists should be satisfied with the incidental profits which such a tariff will inevitably afford. No man with common intelligence can believe that the people of this country, to any great extent, North, South, East, or West, are in favor of any principle in respect to the adjustment of a tariff, except for revenue. The day of tariffs for protection has long passed; all parties throughout the country, except perhaps in special localities, yield now the fact that a tariff for revenue will afford ample protection. I would not discriminate against protection nor in its favor, to the prejudice of revenue. Yes, sir, I go for a *judicious* tariff, which may incidentally, if you please, within the revenue principle, afford protection, while its primary and direct object is revenue; which shall discriminate neither against nor in favor of protection, maintaining that scale of duties upon imports which shall conveniently produce the most ample revenue, and be the least burdensome to all interests.

MR. PURVIANCE. Will the gentleman allow me to ask him a question just at this point?

MR. STEWART, of Maryland. Certainly.

MR. PURVIANCE. I understand the gentleman from Maryland to say he will go for a tariff which will produce the most revenue. Now, I wish to inquire if the tariff of 1828 did not produce the most revenue of any tariff we have had? Whether that tariff did not only produce revenue enough to maintain the government in all its branches, but whether it did not produce surplus revenue sufficient to pay off the debts of the revolution? I ask the gentleman, again, whether, under the tariff of 1842, which was principally a tariff of specifics, we did not have ample revenue to carry on the government in all its machinery—to carry it on better than under the tariff of 1846, or under the tariff of 1857, or under any of the other tariffs approximating to free trade?

MR. STEWART, of Maryland. I answer the gentleman that I believe all the tariffs we have had have been so arranged as ordinarily, with the proceeds of the public lands, to raise money enough to carry on the government; for they have been based primarily upon the principle of revenue. But I imagine

no considerable part of the people of Pennsylvania that the gentleman in part represents would ask for a tariff based solely on protection.

MR. PURVIANCE. In answer to the gentleman from Maryland, I have to say, that from the earliest organization of the government down to the administration of Mr. Polk, it was understood that there was a constitutional power conferred on the representatives of the people to enact a tariff directly in reference to protection. The attention of Congress was called to the subject by Jefferson, by Madison, by Monroe, by Jackson, and even as late as the campaign of 1844, Mr. Polk, over his own signature, in his celebrated Kane letter, declared that he was in favor of protection.

MR. STEWART, of Maryland. It may be true, that, in the days of Jefferson and afterwards, when the manufactures of the country were in their infancy, it was considered wise, in framing a tariff for revenue purposes, to arrange it with reference to protection, and after the war of 1812 to afford them temporary relief.

MR. CLAY. I should like to ask the gentleman from Pennsylvania a single question upon this subject of a tariff for revenue and protection. I would like to ask my friend whether, in 1832, when the celebrated compromise tariff was framed, it was not conceded by the friends of protection, and did they not proclaim it to the world, that after 1842 protection, for protection's sake, must be abandoned, and that thenceforward the doctrine ought to be a tariff for revenue?

MR. STEWART, of Maryland. That is precisely the course of remark I proposed to pursue in reply to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

MR. PURVIANCE. If the gentleman from Maryland will allow me, I desire to say a word in reply to the gentleman from Kentucky. I ask the gentleman from Kentucky, if we were to have no tariff for protection after 1842, why it was that in Pennsylvania the principle of a tariff for protection was made the issue between the friends of Mr. Polk and the friends of the gentleman's lamented father in the campaign of 1844; and why it was there was inscribed, in Pennsylvania, upon the banners of the democracy, "Polk, Dallas, Texas, and the tariff of 1842?"

MR. CLAY. If the gentleman from Maryland will allow me, I will answer the gentleman from Pennsylvania by saying that, in my judgment, the compromise in reference to the tariff was violated in Pennsylvania for the very purpose of courting particular interests.

MR. STEWART, of Maryland. I am sorry to interrupt the colloquy between the gentlemen, but I must go on with my argument, as my time is rapidly passing. The suggestion made by the gentleman from Pennsylvania is refuted by the current history and legislation of the country. It was conceded by those who advocated a protective tariff originally that after a short time they would be able to get on without protection. That was the doctrine proclaimed in 1816, in 1828, and in 1832, when it was emphatically declared that after 1842 no tariff, more than a uniform one of twenty per cent. for revenue, would be urged—that the protective system would then be abandoned. I think that will be understood by the country, no matter upon what ground they electioneered in Pennsylvania. I can see how the manufacturers might maintain that the tariff should be so arranged as to afford them some protection while in their infancy. But should they claim in this year of our Lord 1859 what they asked in 1816, after the war, in 1824, and in 1828? I think that is not reasonable or

just. At that time, when you wanted to raise a revenue of but sixteen or twenty millions, you might with more force contend for a tariff to be adjusted for protection; but now that your expenses are run up to \$70,000,000 annually, and you have to raise that amount, are we still to be told we are to have protection in the same way and for all time? I consider that entirely unreasonable and unjust, and that the common intelligence of the country has come to the conclusion that the system of protection cannot be tolerated *per se*, or with reference to protection alone.

Would Pennsylvania expect, and I am not hostile to her interests, that the government of the United States should put a higher duty upon iron for the purpose of protecting that interest, when, under the *ad valorem* system of 1857, it was twenty-four per cent., and under the tariff of 1846, thirty per cent.? Now, I understand, they only want a specific duty upon iron in Pennsylvania. Well, if you will take the tariff of 1846, and find what has been the average duty raised upon a ton of iron of a particular description, for the sake of illustration, for ten years under the *ad valorem* system, and then put a specific duty upon the article to that amount, it might not be obnoxious to grave objection; for though, under that arrangement, when iron was down, the consumers would have to pay a little more for it, yet when the article was advanced in price, the duty would be no higher, and they would get the article for a less price.

It does seem to me that when iron is high the government should not, by her revenue system, add to the price by an increase of duty.

I would be governed in arranging the tariff, after getting the best information I could upon the subject, somewhat in this wise. Were I satisfied that by having a specific duty of so much per ton, I could raise as much revenue, and that mode would afford incidentally more protection, and, at the same time, impose no additional burden upon my people; I would make no objection to that, because when I go against protection *per se*, I ought not to discriminate against such interests or ignore all considerations of that sort.

MR. PURVIANCE. In reference to specific duties, I say to the gentleman that, so far as iron is concerned, it is a matter of vast importance, I conceive, not merely with an eye to revenue, but to the nation generally. For instance, under specific duties you prevent the importation of the bad iron which has found its way upon our railroads, and which, in my judgment, has led to most of the disasters which have occurred upon our railroads; and I will mention a fact which will satisfy the gentleman of the correctness of my position. The rails upon the Central Road, from Philadelphia to Pittsburg, were manufactured by an establishment near Philadelphia, in Pennsylvania; and it has been ascertained that those rails have deteriorated but one per cent., while the rails upon the road from Philadelphia, through Wilmington to Baltimore, being of English iron, have deteriorated twenty-five per cent. And how does that happen? Why, the British are enabled, under the *ad valorem* system, to sell us iron of an inferior quality, and thrust in upon us, and thus destroy home competition. We cannot compete with iron like that under the *ad valorem* system. But give us a duty of so much per ton, and it strikes at their bad iron and compels them to introduce none but good iron. I state this as an important consideration connected with the interests of this country, because it is connected with the safety of our citizens.

MR. PEYTON. It strikes me that the object of the gentleman from Pennsylvania is to exclude the importation of bad iron from abroad, in order that Americans themselves, citizens of Pennsylvania, may produce the bad iron themselves. I desire to know whether he has any assurance that, if we place a duty upon bad iron so high as to exclude it, the American people will not soon make that bad iron; and that we would gain anything by the exchange? Would it not be a bonus held out to the American manufacturers to make bad iron?

MR. PURVIANCE. My answer is, that if the American people, under this bad iron which has been thrust upon us, would not resort to making it, they would not do so under a system of protection.

MR. PEYTON. It would seem that the English people are only a little smarter than we are in making bad iron. Give them this bonus and they will soon do it.

MR. STEWART, of Maryland. All these matters mentioned by both gentlemen are to be taken into consideration when you come to arrange a tariff, but it depends entirely upon the proof or conjecture of what will be the effect. What I maintain is this, that if you will take the specific duties through a series of ten or twenty years, and convince me that my constituents, as consumers and not manufacturers, will not be injured by the imposition of that amount of specific duty—that though they might pay a little more at one time, yet they would purchase it enough less at another, as argued by the President—that they would not be injured, I should have no objection to adopting that system so far as iron or any other article is concerned. And that is as far as gentlemen can reasonably expect the consumers to go.

There was a time when the interests of only a few States had to be consulted; but now our country extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the Canadas to the Rio Grande, and our interests have become diversified and multifarious, with the increase of our population. Do you suppose you can satisfy the great West—saying nothing of the complaints of the South—with a system of protection by which they cannot be benefitted, but which will tax them for the profits of other sections? I think it is essentially preposterous, and that no party can plant itself upon the doctrine of protection *per se*, and maintain itself before the universal country. They will never, in my judgment, go beyond the extent I have indicated. The President and the Secretary of the Treasury tell us that we now require seventy or eighty million dollars annually; and, as the country progresses in population, as the government increases in all its departments, there will be occasion for more revenue. It may be that the expenditures will so increase that to raise the revenue to meet them by imposts, will carry the duty up to the utmost verge admitting importations, without being prohibitory, when no revenue would accrue, and a system of direct tax, or excise, may have indeed to be resorted to to eke out the revenue.

I say it cannot be expected that the people upon the Pacific, or of the South and of the Northwest, will go for a system for the benefit of a few gentlemen, it may be, in Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, or elsewhere, who are interested in a particular branch of manufactures. They must all take their chances. They must submit patiently to these fluctuations. They must let trade work out its own fortunes or misfortunes, if you please. And, sir, all

that can be expected from a great government like this, which has many sections to protect, and various interests to subserve, is that it will not discriminate in the use of its legitimate powers to oppress any particular interest or section? That doctrine, I think, may be laid down as well settled. I do not care what arrangement may be made in reference to who may and who shall not be President; any party that takes the ground of protection for the sake of protection, and goes before the country alone on that, whether it be the republican, or any other nondescript party, must suffer defeat; for I believe that there are enough interests, disconnected, to act upon proper principles, and ignore any policy of that kind.

But, Mr. Chairman, the President and the Secretary of the Treasury say that you have not a sufficiency of revenue, and that the tariff ought to be revised. Yet it is urged by some of the professed friends of the administration, that they are mistaken; that it may afford revenue enough. I grant that it might possibly afford a sufficiency, but we cannot tell. If it should it must be by largely increased importations. If there be a large amount of importations, upon which your government may raise revenue and get out of debt, the people, unless they have something to export to pay for these importations, will get into debt, and in a year or two you will have another reaction—or revulsion, I believe they call it.

MR. PURVIANCE. Let me ask the gentleman a question.

MR. STEWART, of Maryland. I regret I have no time to yield further. Now, sir, as a free trader, against any system of protection *per se*, I go for a revenue tariff ample and sufficient. I take the recommendations of the President and the Secretary of the Treasury. There can be no doubt in reference to the impartiality of those recommendations. Take them together—one going for specifics and the other for *ad valorem*; and yet they agree that the present tariff ought to be revised. I am prepared to meet that responsibility. I maintain that the tariff ought to be reexamined. There is now not enough of revenue to meet the expenses of the government; and although a devout free trader and a strict constructionist of the constitution, yet I am not prepared, in the face of these recommendations of the administration, in view of the condition of the public finances and the demands of the government, to reject pertinaciously all propositions of revision, and leave the revenue to the chances of trade. It is not wise to reject the recommendations of these responsible officers. I am not prepared to go before my people rejecting that revision, and with additional loans and public debt staring us in the face, and with the contingency threatening an extra session of Congress. That, my people, I believe, and the people of the South, will be opposed to; for the South mostly hold their elections after the adjournment.

The elections generally in the North have already taken place. They have not had them in the South, and they cannot well hold them in the summer, in that region, and therefore postpone them to the fall. If an extra session be necessitated, the responsibility is not with the President, or the Secretary of the Treasury; but it is with Congress itself, for having refused to supply some system to raise revenue for the wants of the government. The people will laugh to scorn any denunciations of the President for calling an extra session. It would be his bounden duty to do so. It would be said that the President has the right to call us back; that we get no additional compensation or mileage

thereby; and that having failed to discharge our duty it should not be left us long to continue in that condition. We have heard, for hours and days, discussions of this appropriation and that appropriation. We have now before the committee an appropriation bill of twenty pages and over, and we have only advanced three or four pages. Look at the debates in the Globe; what do they amount to? Is it not probable that some of the appropriations, though struck out in committee, will nevertheless be reinstated in the House, or in the Senate, or in a committee of conference.

I maintain, therefore, that it is wise, prudent, and sensible, to act on the recommendations of the President and the Secretary of the Treasury, and go to work upon a revision of the tariff. Either restore the tariff of 1846, if that is the shortest way, or take the tariff of 1857; diminish the free list; run up the schedules; take the decimal system; make it five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, or follow out of any of the courses that are in keeping with the tariff of 1846 or 1857. It is not a herculean task, but simple and short in its structure. I protest, therefore, as one of the members of Congress, having a duty to discharge, against the efforts to put off a revision of the tariff. I am not prepared to justify any such responsibility. We shall have to vote for a loan, or a reissue of Treasury notes. The government is running into debt, while gentlemen are maintaining that there will be a sufficiency of revenue; and in a couple of years, probably, the public debt will reach \$100,000,000. Does any body suppose that the present tariff will even afford revenue for the annual expense, saying nothing about the liquidation of that debt? Certainly not. If you do not revise the tariff, you may have to resort to direct taxation. So much for the considerations that govern me as to that subject.

The President also recommends the construction, in some mode, of a Pacific railroad. I want, in the few moments left me, to define my position on that subject, and I would like also to submit some observations in regard to the acquisition of Cuba. I think, so far as the territory or public lands are concerned, they belong to the people of the United States. The government has the right to establish roads. It can explore and survey its public lands, establish land offices; and to facilitate the sale of the public lands, it may provide for the construction of roads. It is upon that ground I put the power to establish a road through your Territories. It appertains to the proprietary right. I do not derive it from the war power, where the President places it. Possibly it may exist under that clause. I admit that you may have a railroad through your own territory; but is this the time to construct it? If you have overland mail-routes—wagon roads; if you let the Territories be opened up—the time will speedily come when you may arrange for a Pacific railway, so far as you have constitutional authority. Will you undertake to build it now as a practical measure? From whence are the population and material to come? From donations of the public lands?

It is not to be expected that population will increase here, as it has done. Emigration is diminished, and as so much good land, more convenient to the great outlets of produce, is still in the market, it is not probable that any lands we may donate on the line of the route, will be rapidly disposed of.

It seems to me that such a resource cannot be relied upon. In the progress of events, and in ample time, I think, such a gigantic enterprise may be effected.

But let us exercise some degree of patience. *Festina lente* is a good maxim in such cases.

I would like, if I had the time, to discuss this project more elaborately.

A few words on the subject of the acquisition of Cuba, only remain to me. That is a grave matter of governmental policy.

This beautiful Island is valuable to us for a thousand considerations, and if it can be obtained, through any reasonable means, it will be a most valuable addition to our domain.

Its annexation must add to our maritime strength, resource, and power; and most undoubtedly will afford incalculable facilities to all branches of industrial pursuit and production throughout the country. The North and West, as well as the South, will derive untold advantages from its acquisition. It seems to me that patriotism, policy, and all the considerations bearing upon the subject, powerfully recommend the adoption of a settled and fixed policy, on our part, to acquire this Island, whenever it can be done in keeping with the national honor and faith. As that Island is now governed, the most perplexing and annoying difficulties are constantly occurring in the limited intercourse permitted us, and if we were not the most forbearing people upon the face of the earth, we should long since have demanded a prompt settlement of our claims upon the Spanish government.

[Here the hammer fell.]